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RHMFISS/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL PRIORITY
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UNCLAS GEORGETOWN 000556

SIPDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (ADD SUBJECT CLASSIFICATION)

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [GY](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [CASC](#)

SUBJECT: (C) GUYANA PRISION OFFICIALS CHARGED IN INMATE DEATH

REF: GEORGETOWN 423

11. (C) Media report two mid-level prison officials were charged with manslaughter following a Guyana Prison Systems (GPS) investigation into the beating and July 11 death of Edwin Niles after guards found him with seven rounds of ammunition. An autopsy revealed an arm fracture and determined the cause of death to be a blood clot in the lungs caused by burns. Niles, who was serving a three year sentence for narcotics possession and scheduled to be released in September 2008, was first of at least three suspicious inmate deaths since July, and his death coincided with the AMCIT prison chaplain approaching PolOff July 16 to allege widespread abuses in the GPS (see reftel).

Comment

12. (SBU) The charging of officials in connection with the Niles case represents the first serious step by any branch of the Guyanese security services to find fault in their officers for alleged abuse. While the prosecution assuages media pressure, it is clearly only a first step and does not resolve the question of whether senior-level prison officials are taking appropriate responsibility in this case, or action internally to insure no future incidents take place.
Williams